Biometric technology for issuing ration cards

3286. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the State Government of Andhra Pradesh is using Iris biometrie technology for issuance of ration cards;

(b) whether it is a fact that BPL card was issued to a famous tennis player from Andhra Pradesh;

(c) if so, how does Government justify to say that Iris biometrie technology is a foolproof method to issue ration cards in the State; and

(d) the action taken, on the basis of instruction issued by his Ministry, on persons having a bogus ration cards in the State of Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. No ration card was issued to any famous tennis player in Andhra Pradesh. However, a card was fraudulently generated by the operator using a tainted photo of Ms. Sania Mirza, the famous tennis player.

This has not happened because of failure of iris technology. The main reason for that is the fact that there were more than 1800 Designated Photographic Locations spread all across the State and it was not possible to connect all of them to one another. These DPL centres worked as stand-alone centres and therefore de-duplication at the time of enrolment could not be done.

(d) Since iris images are unique for individual persons, all such instances are now getting unearthed. This has been possible during a de-duplication exercise taken up by Andhra Pradesh government, which includes bio-metric based de-duplication and door to door verification at field level for weeding out bogus/ duplicate cards and cards held in the names of the non-existing persons/families. Based on results of this, the state government is taking action to eliminate bogus/ineligible ration cards from coverage under Targeted Public Distribution System. The state government would complete this exercise in the whole state by end of January, 2010.

Shortage of sugar in Andhra Pradesh

3287. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH:

SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Government is aware of the fact that due to non-release of entire quantity of levy sugar by some sugar factories, Andhra Pradesh has been facing shortage of 13.998.30 metric tonnes of sugar from March. 2009 to September, 2009;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the response of Central Government to the request of the State for re-allotting the undelivered quantity of 13998.30 metric tonnes of sugar to other sugar factories; and

(d) by when the requested allotment is likely to be made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) The monthly levy sugar quota of Andhra Pradesh is 9690.0 MTs. The allocation of monthly levy sugar quota has been made to Andhra Pradesh in full during the period from March, 2009 to September, 2009. However, the State Government has informed that some sugar mills have not delivered allotted levy sugar quantity to the tune of 13998.30 MTs during the said period.

(c) and (d) The Central Government has taken appropriate action on case to case basis by re-allotting the shortfall of levy sugar in some cases and directing the defaulting sugar mills to deliver levy sugar against allocation orders.

National Food Security Act

3288. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has been inching towards finalizing broad contours of proposed National Food Security Act (NFSA) as it has zeroed in to take only central estimates of number of BPL people in country for providing subsidized foodgrains;

(b) if so, whether Empowered Group of Ministers headed by the Finance Minister in its meeting has decided to set aside all other BPL estimates put forward including by the Ministry of Rural Development under the proposed Act;

(c) if so, whether Group of Ministers (GoMs) has given its final decision in this regard; and

(d) whether many States have objected to the stand taken by GoMs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (d) At present Empowered Group of Ministers is examining various issues related to the proposed National Food Security Act (NFSA), including the number of Below Poverty Line families to be covered under the proposed Act.

Unhygienic packaged drinking water bottles

3289. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that most of the packaged drinking water bottles/jars are highly unhygienic;